PHONOLOGY

Phonemes

p	t	c	s		k	k^w
b	d	ʐ	z	ǰ	g	g^w
mm	nn				ŋŋ	
m	n				ŋ	
w			y			h '
	i		ɨ		u	
			a		o	

Most second-syllable vowels of a word are long. The only exception is when the first-syllable vowel is long. Some suffixes contain a long vowel as well. Length is written only when not on the second syllable.

/nana/	[nana·]	*man*
/naana/	[na·na]	*men*
/tɨniǰui/	[tɨni·ǰui]	*teach*
/na-tɨniǰui/ *REFL-teach*	[natɨ·niǰui]	*learn*

The primary word stress and highest pitch occur on the long vowel, except on a very few words where the length is on the first syllable but the stress on the second. The lowest pitch immediately follows the highest pitch. Secondary stress pitches occur on every even syllable after the primary stress. Stress and pitch are not written in this sketch.

1 = lowest pitch
4 = highest pitch
´ = primary stress
` = secondary stress

2 4 13 tɨníǰuì	2 4 1 32 na-tɨ́niǰùi	2 4 1 3 23 su-ná-tɨniǰui
teach	*REFL-teach*	*want-REFL-teach*
teach	learn	want to learn

All syllables and all morphemes end in a vowel. A syllable contains only one vowel, or a consonant and a vowel, or a glottal stop or h plus a nasal or semi-vowel plus a vowel.

V = any vowel Northern Paiute syllable patterns:
C = any consonant
C_1 = ', h — V
C_2 = m, n, ŋ, w, w — CV
C_1C_2V

a.da	*crow*	na.ka	*ear*	sa.'mi	*wet*
pa.ba -'yu	*big*	pa.hmu	*tobacco*	'ma.ha.ni	*prepare*

The proper rhythm of a Northern Paiute sentence comes from spacing the sentence stresses equally. This equal spacing is achieved by lengthening or shortening all syllables in a stress group. Up to three sentence stresses are placed on any one clause. The sentence stress falls on the last word of the phrase, on the syllable receiving the primary word stress. One stress is placed on the verb. Another is placed on a topicalized phrase, if any. Others may be placed on any other phrase, with nouns getting preference over pronouns, long phrases over short, and subjects over objects.

″ = sentence stress
´ = primary word stress
` = secondary stress

kaï̋ba-màku nɨ́ ka pukü̋ punnï̋
mountain-on I ACC horse see
On the mountain I see the horse.

Snapp, Allen, and John and Joy Anderson. 1982. Northern Paiute. In: R. Langacker (ed.) Uto-Aztecan Grammatical Sketches Vol. III. Arlington: Summer Institute of Linguistics.